

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF GEORGIA  
ALBANY DIVISION**

MATHIS KEARSE WRIGHT, JR., :

Plaintiff, :

v. :

SUMTER COUNTY BOARD OF  
ELECTIONS AND  
REGISTRATION, :

Defendant. :

CASE NO.: 1:14-CV-42 (WLS)

**ORDER**

Before the Court is a Joint Motion for Relief from Judgment filed by the Parties on December 21, 2020. (Doc. 326.) Therein, they state that “[t]he parties have entered into a settlement agreement that completely resolves the fee issues and effectively ends this case.” *Id.* at 1. They ask the Court to vacate its order and judgment awarding attorneys’ fees (Docs. 322 & 323) and order to brief the issue of attorneys’ fees on appeal, which they assert has been rendered moot. (Doc. 326.) They contend that the balance of interests here warrants vacatur. *Id.* at 3.

“Courts determine the propriety of granting vacatur by weighing the benefits of settlement to the parties and to the judicial system (and thus to the public as well) against the harm to the public in the form of lost precedent.” *Hartford Cas. Ins. Co. v. Crum & Forster Specialty Ins. Co.*, 828 F.3d 1331, 1336 (11th Cir. 2016). “The parties’ interests are best served through the voluntary disposition of this case, and further proceedings are curtailed, conserving judicial resources.” *Id.* (reversing district court’s denial of vacatur and vacating its orders awarding fees and costs). While preserving a district court ruling on legal issues is in the public interest, the Parties do not ask that the Court’s finding of liability be vacated, only that the award of attorneys’ fees be vacated. *Cf. id.* (explaining that there is value to the public interest in preserving legal precedent but finding that value outweighed by the interests of the

court and parties). Here, vacating the order and judgment awarding attorneys' fees and for briefing on appellate fees outweighs the slight benefit to the public in these orders by conserving resources and allowing the Parties to resolve this matter in a way that it is mutually beneficial to them.

Accordingly, the Parties' Joint Motion for Relief from Judgment (Doc. 326) is **GRANTED**. The Court's order awarding fees, judgment awarding fees, and order for additional briefing on fees (Docs. 322, 323, 324) are hereby **VACATED**.

**SO ORDERED**, this 5th day of January 2021.

/s/ W. Louis Sands  
**W. LOUIS SANDS, SR. JUDGE**  
**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**